

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Madison, Wisconsin -- Erik C. Peterson, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Walter R. Burnley, 34, of Beloit, Wisconsin, was sentenced today in U.S. District Court in Madison to 21 years and 10 months in federal prison, without parole. On November 21, 2006, following a two-day jury trial in federal court, the jury found Burnley guilty of committing the following four bank robberies:

April 25, 2006 - Associated Bank, 531 East Grand Avenue, Beloit.

May 9, 2006 - Associated Bank, 20 Park Avenue, Beloit.

May 12, 2006 - Anchor Bank, 100 West Racine Street, Janesville.

May 16, 2006 - First National Bank, 1531 Madison Road, Beloit.

The government's proof at trial established that Burnley personally committed the April 25 and May 9 robberies in Beloit. In each robbery, he demanded money from the teller and, in the May 9 robbery, he threatened to kill the teller if she did not comply.

The proof also established that Burnley was the mastermind behind the May 12 and May 16 robberies; in each of these robberies, he directed Lisa M. Harding to commit the robberies. Harding provided the bank robbery proceeds to Burnley and was paid a small amount of crack cocaine for her role in the offenses. Harding was sentenced on

November 8, 2006, to 55 months in prison without parole. Harding provided substantial cooperation in the Burnley prosecution, including testifying at the jury trial even though Burnley threatened to kill her. Given her substantial cooperation, Judge Shabaz granted the government's request and reduced her sentence to 41 months in prison on November 30, 2006.

United States Attorney Peterson stated that today's sentencing was the result of an investigation conducted by the Beloit Police Department and the Janesville Police Department, with the assistance of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The prosecution of the case has been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney John W. Vaudreuil.

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